

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 005469
ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 PRS-01 H-02
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DRAFTED BY NEA/P:WBHARRIS:DP
APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN
S/PRS - MR. CARTER (INFO)
H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)
SSM - MR. MC ANDREW
NEA - MR. NEUMANN
NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH
NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER
NEA/EGY - MR. NEWBERRY
NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM

-----102527 100252Z /66

O 092255Z JAN 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
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PAGE 02 STATE 005469

USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
USCINCEUR
DOD
JCS
CIA
USIA
NSC

UNCLAS STATE 005469

CINCEUR FOR POLAD; TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 11652: N/A - TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - JANUARY 9, 1978

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR JANUARY 9. FYI ONLY,
OFFICER PRESENT TODAY WAS HODDING CARTER III.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY REACTION TO THE ISRAELI CABINET DECISION
NOT TO GO AHEAD WITH ANY FURTHER SETTLEMENTS?

A. I DON'T HAVE AN OVERALL REACTION THAT IS PARTICULARLY
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PAGE 03 STATE 005469

NEW ON THE QUESTION OF SETTLEMENTS. LET ME JUST SAY BASIC-
ALLY THAT THE BASIC QUESTION THERE ON SETTLEMENTS IS ONE IN
WHICH THERE IS OBVIOUS DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN ISRAEL AND EGYPT.

SECRETARY VANCE IS GOING TO ISRAEL NEXT WEEK, OR WILL BE
ARRIVING THERE ACTUALLY NEXT WEEK, TO BE PARTICIPATING IN
THE WORK OF THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE, AND AT THAT TIME, IF
IT APPEARS USEFUL FOR US TO DO SO, WE WILL PRESENT OUR
VIEWS ON THIS GENERAL ISSUE. BUT FRANKLY, BECAUSE WE ARE
GOING TO BE PARTICIPATING THEN, WE HAVE SOME RELUCTANCE
TO COMMENT NOW ABOUT THE MATTER. AND I THINK BASICALLY WE
ARE GOING TO STOP ON THAT DIME.

Q. IN THE PAST YOU HAVE ALWAYS REGARDED THEM AS BOTH
ILLEGAL AND AN OBSTACLE TO PEACE.

A. I WOULD NOT EVEN SUGGEST FOR A MOMENT THAT WE ARE
BACKING AWAY FROM THE GENERAL POSITION ON SETTLEMENTS.
WHAT I AM SUGGESTING TO YOU IS THAT REITERATING OLD POSI-
TIONS IN THE PRESENCE OF WHAT ARE DIRECT DISCUSSIONS BE-
TWEEN TWO OF THE PARTIES, IS NOT A PARTICULARLY USEFUL

EXERCISE. BUT WE HAVE SAID THAT BEFORE, AS YOU NOTED, AND I AM NOT GOING TO SAY THAT WE THINK ANY DIFFERENTLY ABOUT IT.

Q. BUT THERE WERE SOME REFINEMENTS. I KNOW YOU DON'T WANT TO GO INTO THE POLICY, BUT CAN YOU SAY THIS? DOES THE ADMINISTRATION HAVE ONE OVER-ALL POLICY FOR SETTLEMENTS OR DOES IT APPROACH SETTLEMENTS ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS?

A. I THINK THAT OUR GENERAL APPROACH ON SETTLEMENTS INsofar as I HAVE BEEN CONCERNED, SINCE I HAVE BEEN HERE, HAS TRIED TO BE AN OVER-ALL ONE, I.E., THAT WE HAD A GENERAL POSITION ON SETTLEMENTS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. BUT UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 04 STATE 005469

BEYOND THAT, QUITE FRANKLY, WE THINK THIS ISSUE CAN BE RESOLVED IN THE DISCUSSIONS, AND SINCE WE ARE GETTING READY TO HAVE DISCUSSIONS AGAIN, A NEW ROUND OF THEM, IT DOESN'T SEEM TO US PARTICULARLY USEFUL TO COMMENT MUCH FURTHER.

Q. WHEN YOU SAY CAN BE RESOLVED, IN OTHER WORDS, YOU ARE CONFIDENT EGYPT AND ISRAEL CAN RESOLVE IT?

A. WE BELIEVE THEY CAN.

Q. WITH OR WITHOUT THE UNITED STATES?

A. YES. TO THE DEGREE THAT THEY WISH US TO PARTICIPATE.

Q. WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE SECRETARY'S, ONE, SCHEDULE FOR ISRAEL, AND, TWO, HIS FUNCTION?

A. I THINK WE HAVE HAD A GENERAL POSITION ON WHAT THE STATUS WOULD BE OUT THERE. THE SCHEDULE I AM A LITTLE VAGUER ON. WE LEAVE LATE ON THE 14TH, AND THAT MEANS WE GET TO JERUSALEM RELATIVELY LATE ON THE 15TH. WE START PARTICIPATING, AS I RECALL, ON THE NEXT DAY, WHICH WOULD BE THE 16TH. I AM NOT GOING TO TRY TO TELL YOU WE ARE ONLY GOING TO BE THERE "X" AMOUNT OF TIME. I DON'T ANTICIPATE OUR BEING THERE A LONG, LONG TIME. I THINK SEVERAL DAYS, AND SEE WHAT DEVELOPS. THERE ARE, FOR INSTANCE, HOWEVER, NO PLANS THAT I KNOW ANYTHING AT ALL ABOUT FOR THE SECRE-

TARY TO GO RUNNING GENERALLY AROUND THE AREA, AS HE HAS IN THE PAST, FOR A COMPREHENSIVE TURN AROUND THE AREA.

Q. DOES HE PLAN TO BE BACK IN TIME FOR ANY EVENTS SCHEDULED? UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 05 STATE 005469

ULED IN WASHINGTON?

A. I DON'T THINK THAT THAT IS DETERMINED. THERE ARE SOME IN-HOUSE EVENTS AT THE END OF THE WEEK, MEDIA CONFERENCES AND THAT SORT OF THING. OBVIOUSLY THE PRESIDENT'S STATE OF THE UNION MESSAGE. ALL OF THESE THINGS ARE THERE. BUT LET ME SAY THAT HIS SCHEDULE WILL BE PRETTY WELL SET BY WHAT IS FELT WE CAN MOST USEFULLY DO AND THAT IS BEST SAID AT THE TIME.

Q. BOTH THE EGYPTIANS AND THE ISRAELIS SEEM TO BE SAYING THESE ARE GOING TO BE VERY LONG AND VERY DIFFICULT NEGOTIATIONS. DOES HE HAVE SOME KIND OF CUT-OFF? WILL HE SPEND THREE WEEKS THERE OR A MONTH THERE?

A. I WAS REMINDED THIS MORNING AT A STAFF MEETING THAT THERE ARE THOSE WHO CAN REMEMBER TALKING ABOUT GOING TO THE MIDDLE EAST FOR A WEEK OR TWO WEEKS AND STAYING FOR FIVE OR SIX. BUT I HAVE SOME HESITANCE ABOUT THAT. I DON'T THINK HE SEES HIS ROLE AS BEING FOR WEEKS AND WEEKS AT THIS MOMENT. I THINK, HOWEVER, HE STANDS READY, AS THE PRESIDENT AND HE HAVE BOTH SUGGESTED, TO PARTICIPATE TO WHATEVER DEGREE SEEMS TO BE USEFUL IN THESE TALKS.

Q. EVEN ON A LOOSE, UNPLANNED BASIS, IS HE THINKING ABOUT A RUN TO CAIRO?

A. I WOULDN'T RULE OUT THAT POSSIBILITY.

Q. AND THEN CAN YOU NOT RULE OUT THE CUSTOMARY TOUR, INCLUDING SAUDI ARABIA.

A. I BELIEVE I CAN RULE IT OUT. BUT THAT IS AS GOOD AS THE MOMENT AT WHICH WE ARE TALKING.

Q. LAST WEEK WHILE YOU WERE GONE, WE WERE BEING ADVISED
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PAGE 06 STATE 005469

THAT THE SECRETARY WAS ONLY PLANNING A FEW DAYS IN JERUSALEM.

A. I AM NOT TRYING TO ARGUE WITH THAT NOTION.

Q. BECAUSE YOU ARE LEAVING ME WITH THE IMPRESSION OF AT LEAST A WEEK, YOU KNOW.

A. NO, NO. IF I AM, PLEASE LET ME BACK OFF OF THAT. ALL I AM TRYING TO LEAVE IS, ONE, THAT IT IS NOT THE NOTION THAT THIS IS GOING TO BE A LONG TRIP THIS TIME; THAT, TWO, IT HAS BEEN OUR EXPERIENCE THAT THESE THINGS SOMETIMES CAN OPEN UP BEYOND IT. BUT, NO, THE INTENTION IS NOT TO GO MORE THAN A FEW DAYS.

Q. CONGRESSMAN FINDLEY SAID HE WAS CARRYING A MESSAGE FROM YASSER ARAFAT FOR THE PRESIDENT. DO YOU KNOW IF THAT HAS BEEN DELIVERED? HAS THE SECRETARY MET WITH THE CONGRESS ON THAT?

A. NO. WE HAVE NOT RECEIVED SUCH A MESSAGE. AS YOU KNOW, CONGRESSMEN AND OTHER CITIZENS HAVE MET WITH THE PLO IN THE PAST AND HAVE, IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, INDICATED WHAT THEY HAVE LEARNED FROM THEM. AND OBVIOUSLY, IN THIS CASE AGAIN IT MAY VERY WELL BE THAT SUCH A MESSAGE IS FORTHCOMING. FRANKLY, SINCE IT IS FOR THE PRESIDENT, I THINK INsofar AS WHETHER AND WHEN THE DELIVERY MAY TAKE PLACE IS GOING TO BE A MATTER THAT THE WHITE HOUSE WILL KNOW MORE ABOUT THAN I DO.

Q. IS THE SECRETARY GOING TO MEET WITH THE CONGRESSMAN?

A. I HAVE NO SCHEDULE FOR HIM. AT STAFF THIS MORNING,
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PAGE 07 STATE 005469

I KNOW THERE ARE GOING TO BE SEVERAL CONGRESSIONAL MEETINGS OF ONE KIND OR ANOTHER, THAT HE IS GOING TO TRY TO FIT IN HERE -- BUT I DON'T RECALL CONGRESSMAN FINDLEY SPECIFICALLY.

Q. WHEN YOU DID NOT FORECLOSE THE POSSIBILITY OF THE SECRETARY GOING TO CAIRO, DO YOU MEAN BY THAT, THAT HE MIGHT SIT IN ON THE MILITARY TALKS THAT ARE IN PROGRESS, OR DO YOU MEAN, TO CAIRO TO SEE THE GOVERNMENT PEOPLE?

A. I THINK, PROBABLY TO SEE THE GOVERNMENT PEOPLE -- IF THAT WERE TO COME ABOUT.

Q. BUT WE ARE NOT GOING TO PARTICIPATE.

A. I KNOW OF NO SUCH PLANNING FOR THAT.

Q. DO YOU KNOW IF THERE IS AN AGREEMENT YET ON THE AGENDA FOR THE JERUSALEM MEETING?

A. I'M SORRY -- I DON'T KNOW.

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